

Section 2: Determining the Content and Organization of the Profile

To be useful for prevention and care planning, a full epidemiologic profile should answer several core epidemiologic questions:

- What are the sociodemographic characteristics of the general population in your service area?
- What is the scope of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in your service area?
- What are the indicators of risk for HIV infection and AIDS in the population covered by your service area?

It should also answer questions specific to prevention or care planning needs, such as

- What are the patterns of service utilization of HIV infected persons in your area?
- What are the number and characteristics of persons who know they are HIV-positive but who are not receiving primary HIV medical care?

The material should be contained in sections organized in a logical sequence that allows end users to locate information quickly. Chapter 3 explains how to answer the core questions and the questions specific to care programs. The remainder of this section describes the organizational framework of an effective and user-friendly profile.

Profile Sections and Organization

As is true of any good document, a well-organized profile is divided into logical sections:

- front matter
- introduction
- body
- conclusion
- appendixes
- other back matter

Front matter

The front matter should consist of the following:

- **Contributors**, a list that includes the names of writers and others who worked on the profile
- **Abbreviations**, a list of the shortened names for terms and organizations that appear in the profile
- **Executive summary**, a synopsis of the profile's content
- **Table of contents**, a listing of, and page numbers for, topics, tables, and figures

Introduction

The introduction should include the following:

- **Background** about the history and purpose of the profile
- **General description** of data sources and their strengths and limitations to ensure that users understand what the profile can and cannot explain
- **Overall description** of the profile's strengths and limitations
- **Preparation information** that describes the development guidelines, process, key players, and how the development of the profile followed the guidelines and process

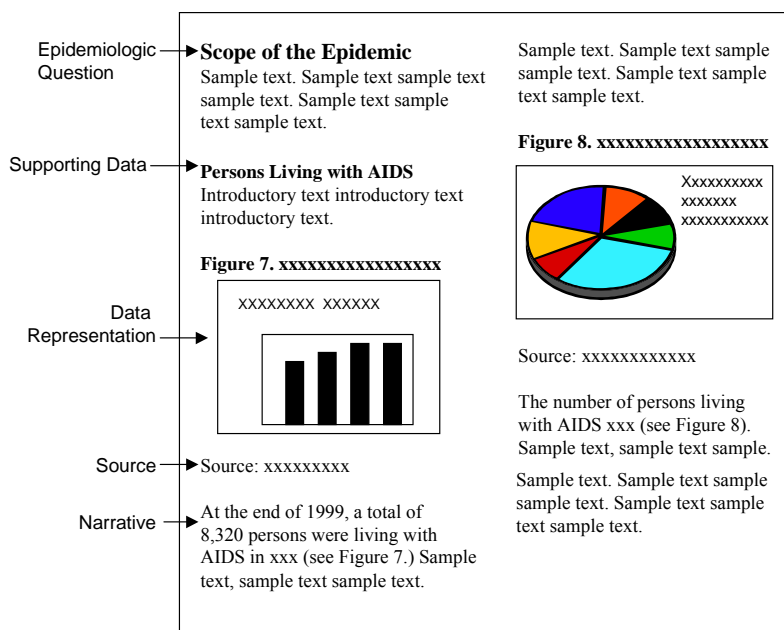
Body

The body of the profile includes the epidemiologic questions and the data that answer the questions.

Data are typically presented in tables, graphs, pie charts, or maps. These presentations should be accompanied by a narrative that explains and expands upon the data.

Figure 2-1 illustrates the content requirements of a page in the profile. No particular page layout for the profile is preferred. The one below is just an illustration.

Figure 2-1
Example of layout of profile body



Conclusion, appendixes, and other back matter

The back matter should consist of the following:

- The **Conclusion** summarizes the data and trends and highlights key findings.
- **Appendixes** contain information on data sources, supporting documentation, and a feedback form for end users to complete and return to the authors.
- **Other back matter (in addition to the appendixes)** includes items such as a glossary and a list of references or suggested readings.